

Ruth Leba Smith

HER FRIENDS SPEAK

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"HER FRIENDS SPEAK"

The Life of
Ruth Lebo Smith

by

CHARLES H. SMITH

*"None knew her, but to love her,
None named her, but to praise."*



**PHOTOGRAPH OF RUTH, CHARLES AND THEIR SON ROBERT,
TAKEN ON ONE OF THE MANY HAPPY YESTERDAYS.**

**THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN AT THE DR. GETTLE COTTAGE
AT LAKE WAWASEE, INDIANA.**

FOREWARD

Zephyrhills, Florida

March 30, 1955

Dear Charlie :

What you are doing is a kind and beautiful tribute to a lovely wife and help-mate. No one but a husband can appreciate what his wife has meant to him, as mother of their children and faithful devotion to the task of the ministry. And Ruth was an especially worthy representative of a devoted Christian and preacher's wife. What you are doing is a lovely tribute.

Sincerely Yours,

Charles B. Croxall, Methodist Minister.

Thanks are due Dr. William B. Freeland, Member North Indiana Conference, Methodist Church, Zephyrhills, Florida for his careful and critical perusal of the manuscript. Many grammatical errors would have crept into the text had it not been for his scholarly revision. Even as the text stands, we do not guarantee perfection.

The large number of friends who spontaneously wrote the messages in Part II of this volume as well as the countless number who gave verbal expression to their love and appreciation for Ruth, have made possible this tribute to one of Christianity's most beloved women.

Charles H. Smith

The Old Homestead
404 North Main Street
Tipton, Indiana
April 2, 1955

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RUTH LEBO SMITH

On a balmy spring day, April 2, 1884, a little girl opened her blue eyes on this world. Her parents, Frank J. and Lucy Lebo, named her Ruth. Her father died three years later, leaving to the little girl's mother the responsibility of caring for her and her sister Mildred, who was one and one-half years younger than Ruth. After the girls had grown to maturity their mother married Val Craft, a fine Christian man. Her mother always said that before Ruth was born she dedicated her unborn baby to God. From her infancy Ruth loved the Lord and His Church, and in her youth lived a devoted Christian life. A friend who had known her from girlhood said a few days after her departure to "the land that is fairer than day" that Ruth had been religious all her life. That she did not wait until she was of middle age with a family growing up about her before she decided to be a real Christian. Ruth was very conscientious in her daily living, when young. One of her friends who knew her from girlhood said she went with Ruth on Saturday to mail a package at the postoffice. Ruth asked the postal clerk if the package would have to travel on Sunday. He replied that it would, if she mailed it on Saturday. She answered that she would wait until Monday to mail the package. One of her high school classmates says Ruth was always "so genuine and sincere." Another who knew her in her youth said that in the discussions in their church youth groups, the young people listened to Ruth's comments with respectful attention because they had much respect for the good life she lived. An attorney who transacted much of the legal work of the family remarked, "Lucy raised two very fine girls." Her religion never assumed the morbid, critical or "holier than thou" attitude. She seldom had anything critical to say of others. Only when they were openly and manifestly violating God's law did she criticize. She led a normal happy life as a young girl, and had a hearty laugh that added gaiety to any social occasion. Her sister, Mildred, died in 1929, her step-father in 1935, and her mother in 1948. Ruth left her earthly home for her heavenly home September 12, 1954, being seventy years, five months and ten days old. Her ailment was congestive heart failure. Everything that medical science could offer was employed to combat the malady. All of the doctors who ministered to her, including one of the best heart specialists in America, said her heart was almost worn out with overstrain and overwork. No organic trouble was discovered. In her zeal in serving others she had so depleted her strength that nature could not restore it, nor medical means improve it. Up to the last she served in an official capacity in several organizations in the Kemp Memorial Methodist Church, Tipton, Indiana, which had been her girlhood church, and in which she was married to Rev. Charles H. Smith, June 14, 1905. Three children

were born to this union, Dorothy, Mildred and Robert.

Ruth attended the public schools at Tipton, graduating from the Tipton High School in 1902. She then attended State College at Terre Haute, Indiana and prepared for public school teaching. She taught three years in the grade school at Tipton before she was married.

She and her young husband who was preparing for the ministry in the Methodist Church left her mother's home for the Methodist parsonage at Rossville, Staten Island, New York where he was stationed as pastor while attending Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey. That journey was followed by many others that the couple enjoyed together until they had traveled in forty-two of the forty-eight states of the Union and in the District of Columbia, Mexico, Canada, Spain, Italy, Greece, Russia, Algiers, Tunisia, Egypt, Albania, Yugo-Slavia and the Holy Land. Both she and her husband not only traveled for pleasure but for cultural improvement. She shared her experiences, especially her visit to the Holy Land by making many addresses and travel talks. The address that she and her audiences liked best was the one "Famous Gardens I Have Visited." In that address the climax was reached when she described their two visits to the Garden of Gethsemane, one in the day time and one far in the night, as Jesus did when He was betrayed.

Ruth was versatile in her accomplishments. She received voice training and for years was an accomplished singer, helping in the church choirs and singing solos, almost always of a sacred nature. She was also a capable pianist. She was a valuable Sunday School teacher, an executive officer presiding with grace and ability as head of the various organizations to which she had been chosen. She never sought leadership but when it was thrust on her she did her work thoroughly and conscientiously. But her real choice was to work in the ranks. It mattered not how lowly the task, she gladly and enthusiastically did her part. Whether it was to wash pans and skillets in the church kitchen or preside and take part in the church parlors, she never once shirked or lagged, but always entered into her work with such abandon and enthusiasm that she inspired others to greater effort. Like the Master, "She came not to be ministered unto but to minister." She loved her Lord and His church, and considered it a high privilege to serve Him in any capacity.

She loved to live in a parsonage. She often said she considered it a great honor to be the wife of a Methodist preacher. She loved to have the people swarm in the parsonage and all over the place. Never once did any one ever hear her complain about too many people coming and going through the parsonage homes where she lived. As

a result, all the people, young and old, loved her and loved to be with her. The appointments where she and her husband served were Rossville, Staten Island, New York, and the following in the North Indiana Conference; Roann, Markle, Bradley Memorial Greenfield, Peru, Bluffton, Warsaw District and First Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana where they served over sixteen years. Then her husband engaged in evangelistic work for a number of years and she often went with him on his journeys.

Ruth considered no pastoral charge lowly or humble. All of them were God's vineyard. When she and her husband were on their way to First Methodist Church, Fort Wayne where he was to be installed as pastor Emeritus in 1949, she said to him, "Daddy, all of our charges have been wonderful, haven't they?" She never saw inside one of her parsonage homes until their goods were moved in. She never complained or found fault but accepted what was there. In all places such a cheerful and uncomplaining attitude inspired the people to want to make improvements and in one case to build a splendid new parsonage. Influential position or rank made no difference in her attitude. As honors came to her husband, and the larger churches and district superintendency opened to them, she was the same, natural, sweet and naive soul she had been in her girlhood days — "so genuine and sincere", as one of her girlhood friends said. All of the preachers' wives loved and respected her because her attitude was the same to all of them. She knew no class or distinction and cared nothing about worldly honor or position. At her last rites her pastor said "She was the most selfless person I ever knew" and a young soldier boy wrote from camp, "She was the most Christian woman I ever knew."

In the following chapters the reader will find what others have spoken or written about her beautiful, gracious and radiant personality, her unselfish and loving service to others, her utter devotion to her Master and the welfare of the people. Her cheerfulness and good humor, her happy manner, her overflowing friendliness to others, whether to friend or stranger, her concern for the welfare of others, her lavish giving of herself and her earthly means were outstanding characteristics.

One incident will illustrate the characteristic of loving, spontaneous service that was ever present in her life. She and her husband were to take a train on the Wabash Railroad at Fort Wayne, Indiana to go to visit their son, Robert, and his family at Detroit. They were to leave on an evening train. When they arrived at the depot her husband proposed that they check their baggage and go out and hunt a restaurant. Ruth said she was not particularly hungry, the night was dark and the weather was bad, and that she would rather stay there with the baggage and

that her husband could bring her a lunch. This he did, and when he came back later into the depot, there she was having a jolly time dividing her food with two other women, one a returned missionary from Africa, and the other a farmer's wife from Michigan. They were chatting and eating and laughing, like a trio of school girls. She never knew a stranger. More than once people have remarked after meeting her for only a few minutes, "Why I feel like I had known her all my life."

She loved to support all good causes of any nature whether church organizations or not. In the latter half of her adult life particularly she was able to satisfy at least partially that ardent desire to share her means with others. A wealthy aunt and a well-to-do mother remembered her generously, and she had ample means to give considerable sums to good causes, for her individual income was not used by the family for living expenses so she gave not only the tithe of her own personal income, but much more than the tithe.

Ruth loved the beautiful fauna and flora of God's outdoors. She had a "green thumb" and whatever she planted seemed to thrive. She had her big Audubon Bird Book and learned to know about all the birds, their songs, their habitat and various characteristics. In the last two years of her life she became an ardent conchologist. She and her husband made some trips to famous Sanibel Island, off the Florida coast, which is the third largest shelling place in the world. There she learned to classify the various shells and study them intensively. She had a beautiful cabinet and several plaques of choice specimens. It was their plan to go back to Sanibel and seek for some choice specimens that are hard to find, but such a joyous and exciting trip was not in God's great plan.

The latter months of her beautiful life were months of physical weakness but triumphant living with her Lord. She would lie on her bed and look out on God's great outdoors and her beloved hydranga in full bloom, at her neighbors' lovely flowers, the trees and the deep blue sky. The little squirrels that had been born and were living in the big tree in the front of her grand old house would play in the near by trees, a little rabbit came close to her window and fed on the succulent grass; the robins would hop on the ground near by and at evening time sing their beautiful songs; all of her feathered and furry friends and the flowers she loved so much, drew her near the Maker of all things.

She loved to have her husband and friends read from the Great Book and other good literature. When she realized a few months before her departure that the time

might not be long, she uttered no word of complaint. One day she said to her husband, "Well, Daddy, God has been good to us, hasn't He? We have lived nearly half a century together. We have raised our three children and sent them through college. All of them are married and are settled in their own homes and are succeeding in business. All of them are Christians and love God and His church. We have nine healthy grandchildren. Perhaps it does not matter so much whether we live a long time longer. If God wants me to live a long time that is all right; if it is to be but a short time that is all right. I am ready to go whenever he calls for me."

In that faith and trust in God she lived daily. All her life she believed absolutely in a God-guided life. Every morning at our family devotions she prayed for His guidance for that day. As one of her friends asks the question in one of the letters, the reader will find in a later chapter, "Did anyone ever believe in and lead a God-guided life as did she?"

Her room in the hospital where she spent her last five weeks under an oxygen tent became a Mount of Transfiguration. Her three children, Dorothy, Mildred and Robert, and her husband, together with nurses, watched over her night and day. She had us sing the dear songs she loved so well and joined in as her strength permitted. She quoted from God's word familiar passages such as "Rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." "Casting all your cares upon Him for He careth for you." "My peace I give unto you." And many others came welling up from the rich storehouse of her memory. True to her lifelong habit of sharing and giving, she shared and gave to the last. She gave away many of her flowers to other sick people as her friends had brought them in such abundance. For several years she had bought beautiful yarns and knit booties for newly arrived babies, or for expectant mothers. After going to the hospital she reminded her husband that there was a little pair of booties in a box in her desk that was to be sent to a young expectant mother. She directed that money be given to some that might need it and gave to her children, grandchildren and very near friends some of her valued belongings, mainly things she had brought from Palestine. She had the privilege of seeing her nine grandchildren whom she adored, and her children whom she loved, the last days of her life.

At eight o'clock Sunday evening, September 12, 1954 she closed her eyes on the things of this world and "went to be forever with the Lord." Her body was prepared for burial by loving friends. She was clothed in a lovely pink dress she had bought herself to wear to her granddaughter's high school graduation ceremonies, the last

public meeting she ever attended. She lay at rest in the dear old house at 404 North Main Street, Tipton, Indiana that was always "HOME" to her. No matter where we lived in parsonage homes, at the farm or lake cottage, or traveling in far away lands, 404 North Main was always "Home". Here her young parents took her when she was a tiny baby. Her mother always told her she could always know how old the house was if she would remember her own age for the construction of the house was begun the day she was born. For over seventy years this house had been home. The property has never been owned by another family. It was "Home" to which her body was taken. There throngs of friends and relatives came from far and near to view the one that all of them loved. Over a thousand condolence cards, telegrams and beautiful personal tributes came from adoring friends, for she had no enemies. Always, everywhere, people sought diligently to shower upon her beautiful tributes of love. In only three instances did anyone ever mistreat her and then by her loving kindness she won them. She never bore the least bit of resentment against any one and never was jealous or envious of any. Therefore everybody was her friend and sought to pay their last tribute of devotion to the one they loved, for

"None knew her but to love her
None named her but to praise."

Never once in all her life was she known to rebuff or treat curtly anyone who came to her door. Whether the caller was a peddler, beggar or dear friend, all of them were treated with courtesy and kindness. One day her husband came home from his parish duties to see a big, burly, uncouth tramp sitting at the dining-room table heartily eating the meal Ruth had prepared for him. After he had gone, her husband told her he thought that was a dangerous thing for her to do, that while they were there alone in the big house the tramp might do her great harm. He suggested that it would be safer to give such a person a sandwich or a plate of food and let him eat outside the house. When her husband told a welfare worker of the incident he said that by no means should she ever let such people in the house when she was alone, because many of them were sex fiends. It had never occurred to her in her sweet, lovely, generous simplicity and purity that anyone might want to do her harm.

If anyone happened in about meal time, she never failed to put an extra plate on the table and invite the caller to eat with the family whatever had been prepared. Her spirit of hospitality was spontaneous, overflowing, warm, informal. Her laughter was contagious and friend and stranger alike felt the warmth and glow of her unbounded hospitality.

A beautiful coronation service was conducted at the Kemp Memorial Methodist Church, Tipton, Indiana, before a throng of people, by the pastor, the Reverend James M. Ratcliff, whom Ruth admired very much and who was very faithful in his pastoral ministration during her illness. Others participated in the beautiful service, a copy of which is herewith printed.

Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in the beautiful Fairview Cemetery, Tipton, Indiana, there “to await the general resurrection and life to come through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Charles H. Smith

CORONATION SERVICE FOR MRS. RUTH LEBO SMITH

Kemp Memorial Methodist Church

Tipton, Indiana

September 15, 1954 2:00 P.M.

“None knew her, but to love her
None named her, but to praise.”

SWEET TONES FROM THE ORGAN

Mrs. Helen Mayne

Medley of the dear Old Hymns of the Church

VOCAL SOLO

Mrs. C. F. Regnier

"PEACE BE STILL" — Baker

READINGS FROM THE WORD OF GOD

The Traveler's Psalm 121 — From the Master's Last Discourse, Saint John 15:
1 — 16.

Reverend E. Stanley McKee, Pastor First
Methodist Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana

PRAYER Voiced by the Reverend Charles B. Croxall, member North Indiana
Conference.

READING Maltie D. Babcock's "Be Strong. We Are Not Here to Play, to Dream, to Drift" — and comments by Mrs. F. E. Fribley.

READING devotional meditation “Completeness” from Oswald Chambers’ “My Utmost for His Highest”, based on the Master’s words “And I Will Give You Rest” Matthew II, 28. Rev. John W. Borders, Superintendent

Rev. John W. Borders, Superintendent
Kokomo District, Methodist Church

SERMON. “The Immanence of God” — Acts 17:28. “In Him we live, and move and have our Being.”

Rev. James M. Ratcliff

HYMN By the Ministers Wives and Widows Association
“My Faith Looks Up To Thee” — Ray Palmer

VOCAL SOLO Mr. Carl Aldridge
“Sunrise Tomorrow” — W. C. Poole
At her last earthly resting place.

COMMITTAL SERVICE Rev. James M. Ratcliff
“Looking for the Resurrection”

DROPPING THE ROSES Rev. Charles B. Croxall

OUR LORD’S PRAYER All the people present led by Rev. John W. Borders

THE BENEDICTION Rev. E. Stanley McKee

NOTATIONS

The song, “Peace Be Still” was one that at the request of Mrs. Smith was sung often during her last illness.

The Traveler’s Psalm — 121st is one that Rev. and Mrs. Smith read every morning when on a journey.

The reading from Saint John — 15:1—16 and the text “In Him we live and move and have our Being” embodied the Christian philosophy that was the daily guide by which she lived. Everyday, and sometimes many times a day, she would say “I believe that God has a plan for our lives and it is our privilege to find out what that plan is and then joyously abide by it.”

Only a few weeks before she left us to go to the Celestial City she said, “I want to be guided by God’s plan. If I am to live yet many years that is all right; if I am to go soon, that is all right. I am ready to go whenever the Master calls.” All through her last illness she joyously and victoriously affirmed her abiding faith in a great good God. She climbed the golden steps one by one until she reached the gates of the Celestial City where Jesus opened the gate and welcomed her to her eternal home.

The poem, “Be Strong, We are not here to play, to dream, to drift — We have hard work to do and loads to lift” by Maltie D. Babcock is hymn No. 300 in the Methodist Hymnal. It was her favorite, or at least, one of them. Often her family would hear her clear strong contralto voice sing it earnestly as she sat at the piano bench at home.

My Utmost — For many years Ruth used Oswald Chambers’ penetrating “My Utmost For His Highest” in her daily devotions.

A dear friend, for sixteen years a parishioner at Fort Wayne sent this beautiful poem as a characterization of Ruth's life here on earth and throughout the years to come.

THE ROSE STILL GROWS BEYOND THE WALL

Near shady wall a rose once grew,
Budded and blossomed in God's free light,
Watered and fed by morning dew,
Shedding its sweetness day and night.

As it grew and blossomed fair and tall
Slowly rising to loftier height,
It came to a crevice in the wall
Through which there shown a beam of light.

Onward it crept with added strength
With never a thought of fear or pride,
It followed the light through the crevice's length
And unfolded itself on the other side.

The light, the dew, the broadening view
Were found the same as they were before
And it lost itself in beauties new
Breathing its fragrance more and more.

Shall claim of death cause us to grieve?
And make our courage faint and fall?
Nay, Let us faith and hope receive
The rose still grows beyond the wall.

Scattering fragrance far and wide
Just as it did in the days of yore,
Just as it did on the other side,
Just as it will forevermore.

MRS. RUTH LEBO SMITH



Ruth's Latest Photograph

Taken October 16, 1953

HER FRIENDS SPEAK

After Ruth went to her Heavenly Home an avalanche of telegrams, condolence cards and personal letters was received by the family. Fifty-five were received in one mail. Over one thousand such messages were received, all giving expression of love, admiration and gratitude for her sweet lovely spirit and her manifold kindnesses bestowed on others in years gone by. In addition to these messages, untold numbers came to the home to express their grief at the loss of a friend so dear.

The following pages record parts of some of these hundreds of tributes to her. The family desires to share these expressions of love and devotion to her multitude of friends who remember her with such deep affection.

Perhaps if she could speak to us from her heavenly home, Ruth would tell us she did not deserve to have so many complimentary things said about her. She was always very modest and compliments embarrassed her. To do good by honoring God and serving mankind was her constant delight. Such a thing as winning the praise and compliments of her fellowmen apparently never entered her mind.

RECTORY SAINT PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

2120 South Harrison Street

Fort Wayne 6, Indiana

September 15, 1954

My dear friend :

I have just heard of the grievous sorrow which has come to you and I hasten to add my sincere condolence to the many which you have received.

Many, many times we have stood by the caskets holding the mortal remains of those whom God has called, and as we spoke our most comforting words we have realized that inevitably the day will come when we shall have to bury our dear ones or they will bury us.

Your greatest comfort now is the knowledge of the sincere Christian life of her who now has passed into the realm of the Heavenly Father. In the fullness of your faith you resign yourself courageously to the will of God, for well you know that

the day is not far distant when we, too, will close our eyes on the things of this world and ascend in essence to the ecstatic meeting with the dear ones whom we have loved and lost and will never lose again.

May God bless you, good friend, and support you in His grace under the heavy burden of your sad bereavement.

Sincerely Yours In Christ.
(Signed) D. Laurence Monahan
Rector.

Note

Both Ruth and I have known Father Monahan as a personal and beloved friend for forty years.

C. H. Smith



Ruth's picture used April 8, 1945 in celebration of the sixteenth anniversary of their pastorate at the First Methodist Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

GOOD WORKS, SERVICES, KINDNESSES

A Tipton friend who has known her since childhood writes:

“The countless services, kindnesses and good works performed by Ruth during the whole of her full and Christ-like life made her the heir to all the riches of heaven. She now enjoys them.”

From one who was a young girl on our second charge:

“It has been a long time since I saw her but the memories of her and your many kindnesses to me, Mother and Grandmother, forty years ago shall always linger with me.”

From faithful parishioners at Fort Wayne came this message written a few hours before the funeral services:

“Just a card of sympathy is not enough, so here’s a note. Our hearts and minds are with you these few remaining hours and would like to be with you very much. We will just try to think of the very many lovely things Mrs. Smith did for all of us. Our family loved both of you.”

A fellow minister writes:

“As we think of Ruth and her relationship to your family we are reminded of the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs which describes the truly helpful companion.”

The Secretary of First Methodist Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, where we served over sixteen years, writes:

“I know many, many people thank God that they have had the privilege of counting you and Mrs. Smith as friends. No one but our Heavenly Father could possibly know the great good that you two wonderful Christians did in Fort Wayne alone through your ministry here, and I know the same is true wherever you served. Many people with whom I have had occasion to come in contact, some of whom were not members of First Church, have told me that they knew you and Mrs. Smith and that their lives were richer by having known you as you were beacons of light that guided them in their hours of need. Bill and I too will be forever grateful for your help and words of comfort in our dark hours.”

One of my sisters writes:

“Ruth was such a good woman, and so kind and thoughtful of others. We need more like her.”

From Melrose, Florida comes this word from a friend in the ministry:

“Of your sorrow and loneliness no other can know but the comforter of us all. After your long, fruitful and happy life together you have memories sweet and rich. You worked as one — no surprise that you have had such a wonderful service in the leading churches of your conference. You have many memories sweet and dear.”

A young Catholic woman writes this message:

“Mrs. Smith was the kindest person I ever met. I only knew her a few years but I couldn’t have thought more of anyone. Such a wonderful life she led and the many, many people she befriended, I know are a great consolation to her dear husband and her wonderful family.”

“I have many living memories of her, for she dug up and gave me many plants. I will remember her in my prayers.”

From one who knew her many, many years:

“My thoughts go back to the time of my mother’s death forty years ago. The Sunday following the funeral service I was in the Church Service and started to cry. I got up and went to the basement so no one could see me crying. But Mrs. Smith had noticed and followed me there to comfort me. That noon she invited father and me to dinner at your house. I shall never forget her kindness at a time when pop and I needed it.”

From Nashville, Tennessee comes this word:

“I can hardly express myself on account of my deep grief at the loss of such a friend. She was always so kind and considerate of all of us young folks in the church. I remember that Helen and Annie Louise and I wanted to go to camp at Epworth Forest and we had to earn most of our money. She gave us work at the parsonage, more to help us than because she needed us. Several times she would say “come on in the room so we can rest and talk a while.” I began to realize that the reason she wanted these pauses was to make the work last longer so we could earn more money for we were working by the hour. She was always that way, working to other peoples’ interest rather than her own.”

Thoughts of the one you loved so much
Are in many hearts today,
And the sympathy this message brings
Is deeper than words can say.

A WONDERFUL WOMAN

Mother of five children, all of whom we baptized, writes:

“She was a wonderful woman. Everyone loved her as we do, and will never forget her nor you, and what you mean to us.”

A fellow minister writes:

“What a wonderful life to her family and the world. Yet, how you will miss her. It is a challenge to all of us to live to bless humanity.”

Good friends from Albion, our former summer home, say:

“We wish to express our sympathy to you and your children in the loss of a wonderful wife and mother, and our good friend. We cherish the remembrance of our good times together. We shall remember you in our prayers.”

From one who recently lost her companion:

“I know what it is to lose a companion. The wonderful life of Mrs. Smith shall ever be a cherished memory.”

From Warsaw comes a message from a former co-worker in missionary activities:

“I have thought so much about dear Mrs. Smith. I did love her so. She was so wonderful and so good. God be with you in your sorrow.”

One who passed through “deep waters” and was often befriended by Ruth, says:

“We received the calendar and picture. How we will cherish the picture. Mrs. Smith was a wonderful person.”

From Sarasota, Florida is this message:

“Mrs. Smith was a wonderful person. We consider you among our very dear friends.”

A man who grew up in our Youth Group at Fort Wayne says:

“Mrs. Smith was indeed a wonderful lady and wife. Both of you always have held a spot very close and dear to me.”

The wife of a prominent physician, our parishioners for sixteen years:

“It is surely a great satisfaction to know that she lived such a good life and you had a good long life together.”

From faraway Los Angeles comes a message from her Cousin Helen:

“It is hard to realize that Cousin Ruth is not there, but of course she is there with you in spirit because that unity we have in Christ is never lost. She was a wonderful person and a splendid Christian and she lives today because Christ lives.”

A good friend at Tipton writes:

“Mrs. Smith was truly a wonderful person and we all share her loss with you.”

A Tipton friend writes:

“You have my heartfelt sympathy. We share with you the memory of a most wonderful wife and mother.”

From former parishioners at Bluffton, Indiana:

“Just a few lines to thank you for the lovely remembrance you sent us of you and your dear wife. We believe we both will treasure that as much as anything we may receive over Christmas. Both of us had to take a cry over it. It looks like you could talk. Mrs. Smith was such a wonderful person that it makes one feel better just to look at her picture.”

A Bluffton friend says:

“None knew her but to love her
None named her but to praise.”

From a woman at Markle who recently lost her husband:

“We each lost as fine a companion as could be had. Mrs. Smith was wonderful and loved by all, as you are too.”

From a dear friend, pastor of a great Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne:

“My wife and I were attending the funeral of her sister at the time of your wife’s promotion. We send you our love. We know that you have all the assurance of the Christian faith. Mrs. Smith, as you so well know, was a wonderful woman and heaven is brighter for her presence. We, a little longer wait.”

LIVED HER CHRISTIANITY DAY AFTER DAY

From one who grew up as a girl in our church :

“I am indeed sorry to hear of Mrs. Smith’s death. Each of us has a beautiful memory of her for she was a person who lived Christianity day by day.”

Another writes :

“You will never know how much Mrs. Smith and yourself meant to us. Words cannot tell you. We often talk about the time we came to your home on the farm with Tom and Betty. Mrs. Smith got such a nice supper for us and really made all of us feel right at home.”

Note — Tom, her son, was missing in action on the Isle of Borneo for almost a year before he returned home, hence her great gratitude.

A friend of only a few years sends this characterization of Ruth :

“A friend of mine passed on today, I did not know her long,
But, oh her heart was happy, and her voice was like a song,
She was so kind to everyone, so lovable and sweet
To relatives, acquaintances and strangers on the street.
She seemed to live her life for God, by being good to others,
As she considered all the world her sisters and her brothers.
My heart is filled with tears today, remembering her smile,
And how she sought no glory but she loved the rank and file,
And all I hope and pray is this, that all who knew her name,
Will take up her example and will try to be the same.”

James J. Metcalfe.

From a former parishioner at Bluffton :

“When I came home from W.S.C.S. this afternoon and read your Christmas letter and looked at the calendar, I just sat there and cried and cried. It is so nice to hear you speak so very nicely of your dear wife and I know she was a devout Christian. She has always been my inspiration and I was so happy I did tell her this whenever I would go in to see her at the hospital. I prayed through my tears that I might be like her and that is my prayer and will be my prayer all the rest of my life. She never did say much about religion, but it just oozed from her like the fragrance of the rose and you just did enjoy being with her. Pray for me that I might always have her ideals and that I grow to be a good woman and try to always give out good as she did.”

From Zephyrhills, Florida, a fellow minister writes:

“I have known Ruth for more than forty years. She was on her own right one to merit the highest appreciation. In the parsonage home, among the people and in the wider activities in which she engaged, she brought many helpful blessings. We shall miss her from these various circles very much. We must find our consolation in two great matters: 1 — Memories of superior service wrought by a loving sacrifice. 2 — Hope that her character personality has only established a basis for eternal achievement and realization of a greater life.”

From faraway Texas comes this message:

“You two have had such a long and happy life together I feel that surely your memories will be a joy and comfort to you, and how rich we feel by having known each of you, and what a blessing was ours to have you in our home for a short time. I am sure you will find comfort in knowing hers was a work well done and I know you will continue to spread joy and comfort wherever you may be.”

There is a home not made by hands,
Beyond its golden door
Awaits the one who's now away,
Not lost — just gone before.
And in that home not made by hands
The Master will prepare
A place for you, and when He calls
You'll meet the loved one there.

There's an open gate
at the end of the road
Through which each must go alone,
And there in a light we cannot see
Our Father claims His own;
Beyond the gate your loved one
Finds happiness and rest
And there is comfort in the thought
That a loving God knows best.

HER LIFE AN INSPIRATION

From a Tipton friend who knew her since childhood :

“I knew Ruth since she was a small child and loved her. She was such an inspiration to everyone who knew her. I know you will miss her lovable and cheerful presence much. May God comfort and bless you always.”

Friends from Evansville, Indiana :

“Dr. Smith, we are thinking of you these days. We know your deep faith will carry you through, and we also know how much a part of you has gone on and left you here. We know that Mrs. Smith will live on in countless other hearts as she will in ours.”

From St. Petersburg, Florida comes this message :

“You and Mrs. Smith are such a wonderful inspiration and example for us. Just being our good friends has enriched our lives immeasurably. We think of you and pray for you daily.”

From one who came as a young woman to Fort Wayne :

“I was sorry to hear of Mrs. Smith’s passing. She was a real inspiration to me at First Church and especially when I was new in the group.”

From friends of many years :

“Mrs. Smith was an inspiration to us by her wholesome Christian spirit and life. She has conquered. We always admired the Smiths for their Christian influence and work.”

From one of our young adults :

“A godly man and his saintly wife have touched my life in a glorious friendship, that none but our Heavenly Father can ever evaluate.”

From St. Petersburg, Florida friends of many years :

“We were heart broken to learn of Mrs. Smith. Thank you so much for letting us know. We loved her very much as did everyone who was privileged to know her. She was so lovely, and inspired us so much.”

From Fort Wayne parishioners :

“The beautiful inspiration that she gave to so many of our lives is living not only through us but through our children too.”

A very close friend of many years says:

“You will never know exactly how much Ruth has meant to me over the years, her example, her views of life, her cheerfulness, her encouragement, her unswerving faith and her many, many excellencies — too numerous to mention. She has always been a great boon and inspiration to those about her, which has meant so much to me.”

A brilliant college-trained friend writes:

“I want you to know that in the death of Mrs. Smith, her life has become so real to me. Every day it seems I recall her deep spiritual words and actions that were so spontaneous with her. Especially I am reminded of her thoughts that we can be kept in the center of God’s will, for this day. I confess I had gotten away from the daily quiet meditation, thinking my duties made me too busy, but since meditating on her death and the life she led, I have come back to spending that time alone with God before I take up the duties of the day and have found it so rewarding in the peace that passeth all wordly understanding. I feel that her death has not been lost and that she is living in our hearts more and more and that she would be the first to recognize it. That is immortality, isn’t it?”

“I teach a Sunday School class of the elderly women of the church and I am reminded again of the devotion she had for the work of the church and the needs of the people around her. I pray that her mantle may in a portion fall on me and I know her spirit is within me. Each Sunday morning as I teach I feel her presence near and I try to carry on in the way she would.”

“She did not seek leadership, but when it was thrust upon her she accepted it, knowing that God would guide her to do what was required. Did anyone ever believe as much in the guidance of God as she did? We are all too prone to slough it off and not give it a chance in our lives.”

From an acquaintance of several years came this message:

“My brother, Arthur attended the Coronation Service and told me how beautiful it was, and how appropriate for such a beautiful character. Mrs. Smith was an inspiration to all who knew her. I shall never forget the many kindnesses extended to me by both of you while I was with my brother in Fort Wayne.”

LOVELY, GRACIOUS PERSONALITY

A dear friend for a third of a century writes:

“We want you to know that we share with you the void left by Ruth here when she went to be with our Father. We do know how happy she is there. She was such a fine person; I am sure God has need for her there.”

A former parishioner says in her letter:

“We will always hold the memory of Mrs. Smith in our hearts as one of the loveliest ladies we have ever known. If only this world were blessed with more like her.”

A former member writes:

“We all loved you and Mrs. Smith so much and missed you terribly when you left. She was such a lovely person. We know she is happy.”

A parishioner in one of our churches says:

“Her life was beautiful. The lives of both of you have always meant much to our family.”

A member of her Sunday School Class says:

“Mrs. Smith had such a grand personality. A body will never forget it.”

Friends for a third of a century write:

“We are thankful for the recent opportunity to renew our friendship with you folks, and to feel again the charm and warmth of Mrs. Smith’s personality.”

A friend who met her only twice, wrote:

“She was such a warm and comforting person.”

From Huntington, West Virginia comes this message:

“Tom joins me in sending you our deepest sympathy. We are never prepared to hear of our dear friends passing, but it is wonderful to know when they are prepared to meet the Master as was she. She was such a happy person as I remember her in our church at Greenfield.”

A former parishioner writes:

“We remember as our pastor when we lived at Bluffton. Mrs. Smith was the gracious wife. Everyone said so. Now all these memories are so pleasantly reviewed and such must be yours and your children’s memories of that nice Ruth.”

One of the elderly women of Fort Wayne, herself an invalid, writes:

“Your wife was such a lovely person and when I hear anybody speaking of her, I feel like saying, and do say, if there is an opportunity;

“None knew her but to love her

None named her but to praise.”

and that is all I ever hear said of her.”

A busy business woman writes:

“Ruth was a gentle, lovable and loving person, and all persons who touched her life will miss her greatly. I send you my deep sympathy.”

From Vermont comes a beautiful tribute from one who knew her well as a neighbor:

“I’m so sorry Ruth had to leave all of you, but if there are any special seats in heaven she surely will have one. Ruth was such a sincere, warm and cordial friend, and I always put her on my list as a very wonderful friend, and person. Her laugh was so real and genuine and she was truly a wonderful wife and mother. I know because I saw her in that capacity very much. An excellent minister’s wife.”

The fine pastor of the church we served in Fort Wayne writes:

“My wife and I often talk about how much you must miss Mrs. Smith. She was a wonderful Christian and beloved by us all. She was an example of what the love of Christ can do through a consecrated person.”

From one who was among the young people of our church:

“How we all loved her. To know her was to love her. Of course you know there cannot be another Rev. and Mrs. Smith for us — never. How we loved you both.”

From one we had known as a parishioner at Peru during First World War:

“I was grieved and shocked to learn that Mrs. Smith had passed away. It was always a joy to meet her. She was always the same cheery, lovable friend. She reflected the light of God’s love. Now it is shining in His presence.”

From a lady on our second charge:

“Ruth Smith was a lovely woman, loved by all who knew her.”

From a friend away down in Texas we hear:

“We were so sorry to hear of your loss. Mrs. Smith was such a lovely person and we loved her so much.”

From a good friend in Lima, Ohio :

“We know you miss Mrs. Smith very much but you have many memories of your rich life with her. She was such a wonderful person.”

Our District Superintendent writes :

“Personalities such as Mrs. Smith’s do not die — even here, as you well know. They go on blessing their friends who knew them, and that is surely true of your loved one.”

A friend from girlhood days says :

“Ruth has always been such a happy Christian person, never tiring in the Service of God and others. We know she has received her reward. She will be missed a lot by many people and in many ways.”

GIVING OF HERSELF FOR OTHERS

A dear friend who had gone through deep waters in the loss of her husband and only child, says :

“Words cannot express my feeling when I read that your wife had gone to her reward. She was one of my best loved friends, always giving of herself for someone else. How many times she helped me through troublesome times.”

Another friend says :

“She was such a good person, always doing something nice for some one; and she will be sadly missed.”

The message of one at Tipton who only knew her a few years, says :

“I was a stranger and she took me in. It was she who took me to the Kemp Methodist Church and Cosmos Class and helped me to feel at home among new friends. I have found happiness and peace there. There is and always will be a big place in my heart for Mrs. Ruth Smith to dwell.”

An invalid to whom Ruth had been very kind :

“I have always admired and appreciated the calendars Ruth sent. The many wonderful things she did for others will never be forgotten. I never will feel she is dead.”

From a younger woman who often went to her for comfort and counsel:

“Memorial”

“How often with troubled mind and heart

I’ve sought her loving counsel and so willingly she gave.

Dark clouds rolled away almost from the start.

Her faith in the Master. His power not only to save

But to keep and sustain all His children here below;

Her gentle steady faithfulness;

Taught us much we’d need to know.

How oft we’ll miss her in the days ahead

But her life lives on forever in our hearts.

When tribulations arise, and to meet them we dread

We’ll remember how she lived her faith

And through loving memory

Christ’s message still he will impart.

Her faith her memorial

Forever in our hearts — It Liveth.”

A very talented director of music who has had sorrow says:

“I shall never forget, and have often said that I truly believe the little gift I appreciated most of anything I ever received, was a little loaf of brown bread that Mrs. Smith brought me one Sunday morning, just when I was so blue, and so down.”

“I can see her yet as she came across the front of the Church and handed it to me saying, “I know you are alone and blue and thought you’d like a loaf of brown bread for your lunch. It was just a bit of typical thoughtfulness to her but to me it was one of the grandest gifts I have ever received. God bless her sweet soul.”

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe
in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s
house are many mansions: if it were not
so, I would have told you. And if I go and
prepare a place for you, I will come
again, and receive you unto myself; that
where I am, there ye may be also.

John 14:4.

HER RADIANT PERSONALITY

From a missionary in Algiers, North Africa, comes this word:

“My wife and I sympathize with you in your loss. Mrs. Smith manifested her interest throughout the years by her generous contributions, and we know that her cheerful and radiant personality must have influenced many people in home, church and community.”

A very understanding friend from Fort Wayne pays this tribute:

“We could not forget Mrs. Smith and her sweet Christian spirit. She was always an inspiration and a help, and her cheery smile was like a ray of sunshine. It was a privilege to know you and Mrs. Smith. Your lives and work among us will last forever.”

A lovely younger woman from Fort Wayne writes:

“Without a doubt you have offered comforting words to hundreds of families during your ministry and now everyone is searching for words to send to you. Mrs. Smith had a heart of gold. She will be missed not only for her radiant personality, her high ideals and big accomplishments, but for those little things she was always doing every day. I well remember one time the Bethany girls were having a rummage sale in the Parish House. It was cold and workers were few, and it was hard for us to get out to lunch. But then there came Mrs. Smith with a large cooker full of vegetable soup.”

A young woman from Massachusetts writes:

“I am constantly reminded of you and your dear wife who have had such a guiding influence in my life. I shall always fondly remember Mrs. Smith.”

From a friend in Tipton:

“I always loved Ruth. I will always remember her and the kind things she did for me.”

A sister-in-law of Ruth's writes:

“Full well I know that Ruth cared nothing for the baubles of life. She knew that ‘life is real’ and she spent her life dispensing good to her fellow mortals and because she lived the world was made better.”

A friend of many years writes a condolence message:

“One of our near relatives has been in a serious auto accident and we have been through a period of anxiety and fear. I felt the power of prayer so miraculously during this time and Mrs. Smith’s constant thought ‘to commit all things to Him’ has been with me every day. Like she did, I am now reading daily Oswald Chambers’ “My Utmost for His Highest.”

One who worked with her closely in the women’s work:

“Whenever we were confronted with a challenge for a new undertaking in missions Ruth would always say, ‘If it is God’s work, we can find a way to do it.’ She would inspire all of us with her great faith, and then would back it up with a substantial contribution.”

One of her high school classmates says:

“Ruth was always genuine. She never flinched from duty. She never whined nor made excuses. She undertook hard tasks and never complained. In her sweet, lovely way she lived victoriously.”

I cannot say, and I will not say
That she is dead — she is just away!
With a cheery smile and a wave of the hand,
She has wandered into an unknown land,
And left us dreaming how very fair
It needs must be since she lingers there.
So think of her faring on, as dear
In the love of There as the love of Here;
Think of her still as the same, I say:
She is not dead — she is just away!

James Whitcomb Riley

KIND AND HELPFUL TO YOUNG PEOPLE

One who was a member of our Youth Group at Fort Wayne :

“We extend our deepest sympathy to you. I shall always remember the way you both opened your home to us as we were growing up.”

From a young nurse — a member of our Youth Group at Fort Wayne :

“I have always enjoyed Mrs. Smith’s calendars, and I believe this one will mean more to me. Her faith and testimony will be a help every time I look at the calendar. May God bless you and comfort you.”

A young man member of our Youth Group :

“You and Mrs. Smith had no small part in shaping my destiny.”

From one who was a little girl in our church in Peru, now a missionary in India :

“We were small when you left Peru but I’ve always remembered both of you. How we enjoyed coming to the parsonage to play in the play room under the stairs. Mrs. Smith has always kept in touch with me. It has meant more, I’m sure than even she realized. I feel a real loss in her passing. I shall be with you in my prayers.”

From a member of our Youth Group :

“I know of no family which had a more lovely, charming, yet downright human and good natured wife and mother than you Smith’s. You know how much I loved her too.”

Fond parents of three young people in our church at Fort Wayne :

“The love you and Mrs. Smith had for the young people meant very much to our family. Our boys remarked several times about how different the church seemed when they came back from the service of their country. They said they regretted that you had gone from there. I think they missed the Welcome Home.”

This word comes from a teen-age soldier boy now in camp :

“I do miss Mrs. Smith an awful lot because I can still remember a long time ago when I was a boy the times she taught me lessons in the parsonage, and she seemed to love me and took care of me like a mother. She was the most Christian woman I have ever met in my life, and I only pray to God that the woman I am to marry will be half the Christian that she was.”

For years active in our young peoples' work. Now the wife of a professor in one of our large universities:

“You and Mrs. Smith have always meant a lot in my religious life. I will always remember our associations with both of you at First Church. Her interest in the young people was unusual. Both of your lives exemplified to me the way of a true Christian and the ideal minister and his wife. I always miss you when I return to First Church. The marriage ceremony you performed for us was the start of a happy life together. Our three children are a blessing indeed.”

BEAUTIFUL, GRACIOUS LIFE

One who was a young lady on our first charge, now a grandmother, writes:

“It was a beautiful service in memory of a beautiful and gracious life. You have many precious memories to comfort you.”

One whom we have known almost all through our ministry, a parishioner for over twenty years, says:

“Ruth was a wonderful woman and lived such a beautiful life like the vase on the garden wall. To know her was to love her and we shall always have beautiful memories of her as you will.”

A Fort Wayne Parishioner writes:

“Her's was a beautiful life well spent for the Christian cause.”

Another writes:

“As you know Mrs. Smith was a beautiful Christian character and she will long be remembered by her friends.”

A fellow minister and his wife say:

“Mrs. Smith was such a beautiful and faithful Christian. Her going was to her a coronation — a crowning in eternal glory.”

One of our District Superintendents writes:

“All of us knew Mrs. Smith as a dear good woman and a capable wife in the parsonage. We are certain that you two who had learned to trust God together through so many years must have had a sweet sense of His presence at the time of her passing.”

From a relative who knew her from girlhood :

“I remember Ruth as a jolly but kind and thoughtful girl.”

From a woman who was a young girl on our first charge :

“It was with deep regret that I read of Mrs. Smith’s passing. She was one of the sweetest persons I have ever known.”

A friend from Bluffton says :

“My heart aches for you. I know how you are grieved about your Ruth. She was so precious to all of us.”

From a brother and sister-in-law :

“Thanks for the calendar and picture. It is a good picture of both of you. Ruth was such a sweet person.”

From a former parishioner :

“We all loved Mrs. Smith very, very much. She was one of the finest women I ever knew.”

A lovely friend of many years says :

“Dear Dr. Smith, Dorothy, Mildred and Bob: My heart is sad, and I know yours are but I am sure there is rejoicing in heaven. She meant so much to me and the countless other lives she touched all through the years.”

“Because she lived others shall live through her life and that is what we mean by immortality. If ever there was a selfless person she was one — always thinking of others, and giving meaning to the word “Service” and surely exemplified the meaning of Jesus in her life.”

“My mind recalls so many memories and how much richer my life has been because I have known her. Her faith will sustain you and comfort you and will grow in your lives and in the grandchildren whom she loved so much.”

From far away Los Angles comes this loving tribute :

“I have known and loved Ruth since she was a beautiful blond girl in pigtails. She and her sister Mildred would come over to her grandmother’s and sing for us. We loved their sweet childish voices. I can hardly realize they have both departed to the other world. It must be a great consolation to you that she expressed her desires to you so beautifully and was not afraid to go.”

A very prominent Christian business man writes:

“The Memorial seemed so much like Mrs. Smith in its simple but inspiring way. She was a noble woman and I was glad to be given an opportunity to contribute to the memorial for her at First Church.”

A very close Tipton friend made Christlike in the crucible of affliction says:

“The thing we have enjoyed most is the picture of Ruth. It is so like Ruth as we all knew her and loved her. We have always loved those calendars she sent out year by year. The tribute on the back of the brochure is beautiful. It was read at our Mable Michel circle.”

ONE OF THE SAINTS OF EARTH

A dear friend who had just lost her husband says:

“We can sympathize with each other in our loss. I always looked on your wife as one of the saints of the earth.”

An acquaintance writes:

“Thank you for the lovely calendar and the “In Memoriam” of Mrs. Smith. Both of them will remind me of Mrs. Smith. She was truly a saint of God.”

A dear one who was a member of our Youth Group writes:

“I shall always remember Mrs. Smith’s saying God had a plan for every one of us and I am sure she is content with the plan He had for her.”

From far away Western Texas comes this word:

“I am happy to have that picture of both of you, and that lovely memorial of Ruth was I know, fitting for her, for I am sure no one lived a more devout life.”

From one of the younger ladies of Fort Wayne:

“I do treasure the copy of Mrs. Smith’s service, a service as beautiful as the saintly soul she was.”

One admired her for her devotion to His cause said:

“If Ruth Smith had been a Roman Catholic, the church would bestow sainthood on her because of her absolute devotion to God and His cause, and she would be known as Saint Ruth. She will always live in the hearts of all who knew her.”

DEAREST OF MEMORIES

A woman from Ohio writes:

“Thanks for the calendar. We keep it on our desk and read the little verses, which helps to start our day. So sorry to hear of Mrs. Smith’s passing away. I have the dearest memories of her.”

A member of her Sunday School Class says:

“Thanks for the lovely calendar. I always enjoy them so much. How wonderful when we have such abundant memories of her full and happy life.”

A friend from Florida who had gone through deep waters writes:

“Doesn’t it seem that heaven is just a little closer since she is there? Since Robert (their son) went we have felt that it will be a short time until we also will go and join him. You have many, many wonderful memories.”

One of her former school teachers writes:

“Thanks for the lovely and useful calendar and picture of Ruth. I was always very fond of Ruth and it is such a pleasure to have her picture.”

Here is one of the most constructive and helpful of all letters received. It comes from one of her dear Christian friends at her home town, Tipton, Indiana:

“Thanks so much for the calendar and the picture. Such a splendid likeness of your wife brought tears to my eyes, because it is so difficult to see why she couldn’t have been with all of us for at least ten years or more. We miss her here in all of the church meetings. In the Cosmos Class she always had so many interesting and worthwhile remarks to make in the discussion.”

“I know her loss to you is probably more difficult because it has come to you in your retired years when you have more time to be reminded. You will find though as time goes on that you will not grieve any less but your sorrow will not be as acute. It seems that God has arranged it to be that way because as individuals we could not endure things without that provision.”

“When the darkness of her loss becomes a little less, you will be able to get back to the wonderful years you have had together and realize that you have been especially blessed with such a wonderful wife and your long time together in the Christian work. You have both led such a worthwhile life that your memories will surely all be happy ones.”

A sympathetic and understanding fellow-pastor writes:

“You have a wealth of memory and satisfaction that can never be taken from you. You have been greatly blessed in living and sharing your life with such a noble woman as Ruth, especially that she could be the mother of your children. The wonder of that will never leave you.”

From a former pupil of hers in the Tipton School:

“Mrs. Smith was one of my favorite teachers. I will always treasure the remembrance of her.”

A lady evangelist who conducted a revival at our church:

“We shall never forget all the things you and Mrs. Smith did for us. We look back with happy memories to those times.”

A former parishioner:

“Mrs. Smith will live in the memory of the people of First Church for many years to come.”

Another parishioner of sixteen years says:

“I shall always cherish her memory and the many lovely things she did for others. Also her kindness to us.”

A very dear bosom friend of Ruth's for thirty-six years writes:

“We all of us loved her dearly as did every one who knew her, and I, speaking for myself, will miss her more than you will ever know, as I need the strength and encouragement that only Ruth could give me. I could talk to her and we could discuss little things that I just can't seem to mention to others.”

“The only consolation I feel that I can offer you is that there are wonderful souls who because of their lives and their works never leave us as long as our memories endure. Ruth was a wonderful wife and a wonderful mother to her children.”

“All of your friends, including myself, and everyone that ever knew Ruth will recall her earnestness, her honor and integrity in all things and will count as a priceless treasure the memory of her friendship and will share with you in your grief.”

“The memory of Ruth and her sweet ways, and the assurance you have of God's love and His care will help you through many dark days.”

A loving musical friend of Tipton says:

“We know what you are experiencing, all the pain, the conflict of seeing your loved one “put out to sea.” But you know the horizon is but the place where she goes on living gloriously. We cannot see that place now, but our memories of Ruth are only beautiful, full of abundant living. She has been a great inspiration to me. Rev. Smith and Ruth will always live on in the hearts and lives of those whom they have contacted.”

From one of our District Superintendents comes this beautiful tribute:

“The Memorial Services yesterday was very beautiful and fitted perfectly the life of your wonderful wife. One of the women said to my wife, “It was a perfect tribute all the way through and every word of it was true.”

“I could not help thinking about what a wonderful faith we have and what a resource it has been for both Mrs. Smith and yourself. We share deeply with you your sense of loss.”

One of our ministerial friends who recently lost his companion sends this most comforting message:

“The memory of the beautiful character of Sister Smith, the sweetness of her disposition, her gentleness, and tenderness now is precious to you. You will remember how you were blessed with so many years with her companionship. The thought that gives most comfort is that she is not dead. She is alive and is with Christ who loves her. She is not in a strange land among strange people, but in her Father’s house with her own people, waiting the coming of the one she loves. Lonely and silent are many hours for us now, but in those lonely and silent times blessed is the fellowship of Him who said, “I will not leave you comfortless.”

It’s very hard to bear the loss
When loved ones go away,
But may the thoughts of many friends,
In some way, help today;
And may your cherished memories
Bring comfort to you, too,
And help to make your loved one seem
Still very close to you.

Edgar A. Guest

HER SINCERITY AND INTEGRITY

A minister's widow writes:

“Thank you for the calendar with its inspirational message. I shall hang it near my desk, and it will remind me through the year of Ruth — always so sincere and kindly. I am glad to have her picture too which was taken just about the last time I saw her.”

A fellow minister writes:

“What a wonderful team mate and companion Mrs. Smith was — a tower of Christian character.”

From Los Angeles comes a message from retired missionaries:

“We read in the Christian Advocate of the passing of your dear wife Ruth. God has been your strength and comfort. Precious memories linger, which we are sure are a challenge for you to carry on as your dear Ruth would have you do.”

From a lonely school teacher whom she befriended:

“Friends have written me of the death of Mrs. Smith. She was so good to me. I was with her for Sunday dinner and was her guest on many occasions. I can remember so many kindnesses on the part of both of you.”

A parishioner for sixteen years writes tenderly:

“The Memoriam of Ruth is very expressive of the exemplary life she led, so sincere and thoughtful of others, and so completely Christian.”

From one of the dearest friends she ever had:

“Received the calendar, always so thoughtful and inspiring. But best of all was the picture of Mrs. Smith. Bless her heart. She was always so sturdy and dependable. We laid the corner-stone of our new church and put the lovely calendar in it.”

From a long time friend in the ministry:

“I want to assure you of my deep concern and sympathy in the brief separation here from your wonderful companion Ruth. She was a tower of strength to her family, church and innumerable friends. She was ever the same. My wife always appreciated her and her kind attitude to the ministers' wives. What a wealth of rich memories you and the children will possess! Ruth was just the kind of woman that makes life worth while.”

Her cousin from Los Angeles writes :

“Ruth leaves behind her an enduring testimony by her beautiful example of Christian Service. I remember her simplicity and trusting directness of her prayers.”

From very dear Bluffton friends :

“We always love to hear from you and to receive the thoughtful calendar each Christmas. We know that this year is particularly difficult for you, but we are happy that you can carry on just as dear Mrs. Smith would want you to — for her too.”

From Florida comes a lovely message from one of her high school classmates :

“I have always loved Ruth even when we were children. She was always so genuine and sincere. I have spent many happy hours in the grand old home on North Main Street. I felt so honored to be her bridesmaid. And it was wonderful she could have her marriage and final rites in the same church — just fifty years between.”

LOVED HER SO

A fine Christian man from Ft. Wayne who recently lost his wife sends this message :

“My wife and I with every one else loved Mrs. Smith and now they are together in their heavenly home, and as life is short on this earth it will be but a short time until we will all be together.”

From a woman who was a child on our first charge :

“Your “In Memoriam” service leaflet of Mrs. Smith is certainly wonderful. I remember both of you when you first came to our house when I was a girl. My parents enjoyed you both so much.”

A friend of her girlhood days :

“Thanks for the calendar. They are an inspiration. I keep them where I can see and read the passages daily. I especially appreciate the picture. I did love Ruth and miss her so very much. The day I got the “In Memoriam” leaflet I wept all day.”

From a friend :

“I am sending my heartfelt sympathy to you at this time. May God’s presence be very near you in this hour of sadness. I shall always cherish the memory of dear Mrs. Smith and I know she will be greatly missed. I have always said that you and Mrs. Smith were the favorite guests in our home.”

LOST A DEAR FRIEND

A former member of her Sunday School Class at First Church, Fort Wayne, writes:

“We are with you in your deepest hour of sorrow. We feel we have lost a very dear friend.”

A man and wife, fellow members of the Church at Tipton write:

“Thanks so much for the calendar and picture. How fortunate we are to have had Ruth as a friend, and to have you in the church and community.”

Friends in Winter Park, Florida write:

“Were so glad to get your card and pictures. We shall always cherish the picture and coronation service for Ruth.”

A lifelong friend at Tipton writes:

“We miss Ruth in our Mable Michel Circle with her dry wit and her ability. We always appreciated her leadership.”

From a friend in Baton Rouge, Louisiana:

“The announcement of Mrs. Smith’s passing came as a great loss for we felt we had really lost a good friend and we know the depth of your feeling. I want to keep the picture for Nancy for Mrs. Smith was one of the witnesses of her baptism.”

There is no time that we could set
For parting
We who must remain
Are never ready for such pain.
Even our prayer would be: “Not yet!
Not yet, dear God — another day
With us let our beloved stay”.
We must believe, when fall the blow
That, wisely, God has willed it so.

HER ETERNAL REWARD

From a devoted friend :

“Thanks so much for the calendar and memorial of dear Mrs. Smith. I am sure she is rejoicing around the great white throne this first Christmas in the eternal city.”

A dear friend from Findlay, Ohio who has known her since childhood sends this message :

“Just heard of your sorrow. You have our heartfelt sympathy. A precious soul has gone to heaven and she has earned her rest. The Lord was good to share her all of these years. And you can rest in the comfort of the loving care you gave her.”

A minister and his wife writes:

“We followed Ruth’s illness with regrets and many prayers. God alone knows the answer why good people suffer so long before being released from this house of flesh, and take the immortal spirit there to dwell in joy and peace for ever more.”

A good friend who has had to suffer a lot, writes:

“I have thought of you a plenty since you and Dorothy were here, and you wondered why Ruth had to suffer. Of course you would wonder. Well there is an answer. But you have been in no condition or position to search for such a crucial answer. You do have a profound faith and that is enough for now. One thing we know is that we need not feel sorry for Ruth.”

From dear ones who had gone through agonizing sorrow :

“Bless you, dear friend, as you walk a hard path. How we all loved her and still do. I think that is one of the best proofs we have that life continues after physical death — the fact that we still love the one who has gone ahead of us. It is more with us, than a love for our son’s memory. It is the same tender love we felt for him always.”

From the Corona Class, First Church, which she taught for more than ten years:

“Dear Rev. Smith: We all feel the passing of our dear devoted teacher and friend very deeply. We know she is with her Heavenly Father, whom she loved and served to the end. We are all praying for you and your fine family in this hour of deepest grief. We are giving a memorial to First Church in her name towards the new building instead of sending flowers. We feel that would make her happy.”

Very active couple at First Church, Fort Wayne say:

“Truly there was never anyone more ready to go to an eternal reward than was Mrs. Smith. Her example will live on and mean much to many beside her family.”

A ministerial friend of the Christian Church:

“I express to you my sympathy. I am sure you are finding comfort in the knowledge that your wife was a devout Christian. You have long preached a gospel of immortality, and in the assurance that comes therefrom you are strengthened and sustained.”

From a member of the Corona Class:

“I just cannot tell how sorry I feel that I have lost one of the best friends I will ever have on earth. It has been a pleasure to know Mrs. Smith and to listen to her teach our class. She told me when my brother, Alfred, died that the Lord wanted some young flowers. I would say He has one of the prize flowers in His home now.”

SUMMATION

A sister-in-law, widow of one of my brothers, pays Ruth this remarkable tribute:

“Someone once wrote, ‘the great use of a life is to spend it for something which outlasts it.’ Ruth did just that.”

“Every man’s life is a plan of God, wherein there is design, purpose, a task, an achievement, a goal to be reached, something that will fit him to live on after what we call death.”

“Ruth went home to be with her Savior triumphant in her Christian faith” — Beautifully worded and so true. And how glorious that Ruth was able mid the maze of life to find the reason for her being. She reached her goal. Bless her and you. You have my heartfelt sympathy.”

As spring follows winter,
So peace follows pain;
Sunshine is brightest
Just after the rain;
Night’s deepest shadows
Must yield to the dawn —
And may comfort await you
When sorrow has gone.

SHOULD YOU GO FIRST

Should you go first and I remain
To walk the road alone,
I'll live in memory's garden, dear,
With happy days we've known.
When fades the lilac blue;
In spring I'll wait for roses red,
In early fall when brown leaves call,
I'll catch a glimpse of you.

Should you go first and I remain
For battles to be fought,
Each thing you've touched along the way
Will be a hallowed spot.
I'll hear your voice, I'll see your smile,
Though blindly I may grope;
The memory of your helping hand
Will buoy me on with hope.

Should you go first and I remain
To finish with the scroll,
No lengthening shadows shall creep in
To make this life seem droll.
We've known so much of happiness,
We've had our cup of joy,
And Memory is one gift of God
That death can not destroy.

Should you go first and I remain,
One thing I'd have you do:
Walk slowly down the path of death,
For soon I'll follow you.
I'll want to know each step you take
That I may walk the same,
For some day down that lonely road
You'll hear me call your name.

Albert Kennedy Roswell

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